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TDOT PROJECT NO. SR-32  
(COSBY TO WILTON SPRINGS ROAD)  
COCKE COUNTY, TENNESSEE

PUBLIC MEETING HELD ON AUGUST 9, 2018

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1 PRELIMINARIES

2  
3 MR. NAGI: We will begin our presentation  
4 in about five minutes. So if you are looking at the  
5 plans on the right side of the room on your left,  
6 please try and find a place to seat. We don't have a  
7 lot of seats remaining, but there are a few spots.  
8 Once again, our presentation will begin in about five  
9 minutes. Thank you.

10  
11 (OFF THE RECORD)

12  
13 MR. NAGI: We will begin our presentation  
14 here in just a couple of minutes. So if you are  
15 taking a look at the plans, if you could find a place  
16 over here, so you can take a look at the presentation  
17 with us. There is still a few seats remaining, not a  
18 lot, even on the bleachers or on both sides, here.  
19 So once again, we are going to begin our presentation  
20 in just a couple of minutes. Please stop looking at  
21 the plans, and we will get started here in just a  
22 second.

23 Well, good evening, every one. And once  
24 again, thank you very much for coming out even though  
25 it's hot in here, but hopefully it is going to cool

1 off in just a little bit. My name is Mark Nagi. I  
2 am Relations Officer for TDOT Region 1, based here in  
3 East Tennessee. We are here tonight at the Armory  
4 National Guard Armory building in Newport to discuss  
5 the proposed State Route 32, US 321, improvements  
6 from State Route 73 in Cosby to Wilton Springs Road.

7 The purpose of this meeting is to provide  
8 an update on the project's status, show the proposed  
9 alternatives currently under consideration, and to  
10 obtain additional public input regarding those  
11 alternatives.

12 Joining us tonight from the Tennessee  
13 Department of Transportation are from our Project  
14 Development Division, Dexter Justis, John Barrett,  
15 Christie Brown, Stacy Weaver, Andy Padgett, Julie  
16 Aldrich, Randy Plummer, and Emma Reinbold.

17 From TDOT's Environmental office Michael  
18 Palmer, Madison Tagues and Keven Brown.

19 From our consultant HDR is Valerie Birch.  
20 From our consultant Kimley Horn is Meredith Krebs.

21 Once gain, this is a TDOT Public  
22 Informational Meeting. If you'd like to make a  
23 comment on the record, we do have a court reporter  
24 present. She is in the front of the room right here.  
25 She is going to record all the public comments during

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1 the meeting. She is also able to take your comments  
2 down on a one on one basis, if that is something that  
3 you would prefer.

4 Also, as you walked in and signed in,  
5 you've noticed we have sheets of paper and pens up  
6 front. You can write down your comments and hand  
7 those to us tonight, or if you wanted to take those  
8 home, think about it, you have 21 days from today to  
9 have those comments mailed back to us, to make sure  
10 that they get officially on the record.

11 Coming up in just a couple of minutes, we  
12 are going to have a brief presentation. After the  
13 presentation, we are going to set aside some time.  
14 If you'd like to make a public comment with any  
15 general questions you have about this project. If  
16 you have a question specifically about your own  
17 property, we ask that you do that with the  
18 representatives after the public question and answer  
19 session. But once again, we are happy to answer any  
20 questions that you may have.

21 Before we go any further, I know that we  
22 have the Newport Plain Talk, the Morristown Citizen  
23 Tribune, WNPC Radio and WLIK Radio. Are there any  
24 other members of the media that I did not mention,  
25 that are here tonight? Okay. Also, I know that

1 Representative Jeremy Faison is here and  
2 Representative, where are you in the building?  
3 Representative, would you like to say something  
4 before we get started?

5 REPRESENTATIVE FAISON: Good evening. It  
6 is so good to see this group of wonderful Cocke  
7 County people here and thank you, TDOT, thank you  
8 Mark, for coming. I wanted to let you know going into  
9 this, this is, this is a project that you paid for.  
10 And if there is 300 people in here tonight, there is  
11 300 different ideas of the best way to do this  
12 project. And this is part of the way our government  
13 works, and it's encouraging to me to see each one of  
14 you show up, and I want you to know after TDOT is  
15 gone, and if you still have questions or  
16 frustrations, feel free to reach out to me. I'll do  
17 what I can to make sure you get the right answers.  
18 God bless you. Glad you are here. Thanks for being  
19 here, Mark.

20 MR. NAGI: Thank you, Representative. Are  
21 there any other, I know there is some other elected  
22 officials here. If you are an elected official,  
23 please stand and state your name and the office that  
24 you hold. Okay. Well, with all that being said,  
25 I'll now turn things over to Valerie Birch from our

1 consultant HDR who will have a short presentation.  
2 After the presentation, we will be available until  
3 7:00 o'clock to answer any questions you may have in  
4 a one on one setting with TDOT representatives set up  
5 around the building. Once again, after the  
6 presentation, we will have time set aside for a  
7 public question and answer session, if you have any  
8 general questions about the project as well. With  
9 that said, I'll turn things over to Valerie. Here  
10 you go.

11  
12 PRESENTATION BY MS. BIRCH:

13  
14 MS. BIRCH: Again, thank you all for coming  
15 out. It's great to see this turn out. I understand  
16 that we ran out of hand-outs and comment cards, so I  
17 want to let everybody know that they will be  
18 available on line on Monday. So just go to the TDOT  
19 web site, and you will be able to get them that way.  
20 And also it's been a while, so I am going to go a bit  
21 through the history a little bit. So we are coming  
22 out to talk to you now. I think you will have other  
23 opportunities for input. This is not the last  
24 opportunity of that. We are still sort of wanting  
25 to, you know, hear what everybody has to say, get

1 updates, you know, on where this project has been.  
2 Because I imagine a number of you were here in 2010  
3 and 2012 when we showed alternatives at that point.

4 So I am just going to go over some history  
5 and give you an update. And again, sorry that it's  
6 so hot in here. I'll try to be quick so you can cool  
7 off a little bit.

8 First is the project location, I am sure  
9 most of you are familiar where, with the project. It  
10 goes from Hooper Highway on the south end all the way  
11 up to Wilton Springs Road, currently a two lane kind  
12 of windy in some places, and as Mark said, you know,  
13 we want to share some information, what's going on  
14 currently with the project. And we want to hear your  
15 input, we want to hear what you think about the two  
16 proposed alternatives. What we are basically showing  
17 on it emphasizes it's not two that are being proposed  
18 at the same time. We have two separate alternatives.  
19 In the beginning they are two separate, and then they  
20 are common, and I'll talk about that a little bit  
21 more later, but we do have two separate alternatives.  
22 So we want to hear what you think about those, and  
23 any suggestions, whatever.

24 And also, we are here to meet the intent of  
25 the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, or

1 NEPA. They are expecting, you know, if there is any  
2 kind of federal funds, you have to go through this  
3 Environmental process. So that's the stage we are in  
4 right now, doing environmental studies because it's  
5 tied to getting federal funds, it's tied to getting  
6 federal permits.

7 And then we are here to answer questions,  
8 as Mark said. So a little bit about the project  
9 background for those of you who might not have heard  
10 it before or don't remember. Two proposed built  
11 alternatives in the past, 1998 we had the western  
12 alternative that went west of the existing 32 down by  
13 Hooper Highway on the west side of Stonebrook. That  
14 one has been around since about 1998.

15 On the eastern alternative that ran on the  
16 other side of existing 32 in that same area, came  
17 down by the Post Office, crossed Cosby Creek, that  
18 was shown to the public back in 2012, and it was in  
19 response to some comments that were heard in the 2010  
20 public meetings. So in 2010 the presentation was  
21 about that western original alternative, and the no  
22 built. The no built means that you are just not  
23 going to do anything, except normal maintenance. It's  
24 an alternative we are required to look at. It  
25 basically serves as a baseline to compare impacts to,

1           okay. So it's always going to be in the study.

2                       And then in 2012 we came back, and that's  
3           where the eastern alternative had come in, to show  
4           that to the public. So you have the western, which  
5           was shown in 2010, and it's on the print, on the maps  
6           that you all were looking at earlier. You have the  
7           eastern alternative, and then you have the no built.  
8           Okay. So those are what we've looked at in 2012.

9                       Then the project kind of went on hold. You  
10          know, the State didn't really have a lot of money.  
11          So they were looking at, they were reviewing a bunch  
12          of projects statewide, not just here. It was all  
13          across the state, to try to figure out what they  
14          could do with what they had, with the funding.

15                      So what came out of that review process was  
16          the alternative, second alternative that you guys are  
17          looking at tonight that goes up existing Cosby,  
18          existing 32 down by the Post Office and that area.  
19          And then once you get past that, near the sub-  
20          station, both of those are the same, okay. So that  
21          came out of this study, and then also what has come  
22          out of it is a proposed phasing. So proposing like  
23          two lanes, two to three lanes with a five lane right  
24          of way, and then as traffic warrants it, eventually a  
25          full built, a five of five lanes. So, and you can't

1 really see this in this light. But this is what you  
2 will see on the big maps in the back.

3 These are the two alternatives that were  
4 studied, and you will see the eastern alignment that  
5 went, that crossed Cosby Creek twice. Then the new  
6 one, the new build alternative that goes up existing,  
7 that eastern alternative that was presented in 2012  
8 is now off the table. It crossed Cosby Creek twice.  
9 It's an exceptional Tennessee water. The resource  
10 agencies had a lot of trouble with it. The public  
11 had a lot of trouble with it. So it's been  
12 dismissed. There is cultural resource issues along  
13 that alternative. So there is a lot of environmental  
14 impact. So that one has been taken off the table.  
15 At least we are asking, I mean, we have to still get  
16 the agency buy-in, but we are thinking it's going to  
17 come off the table.

18 So again, I've talked a little bit about  
19 what they are calling phased construction, sort of  
20 what like what you saw on the other end of 32, from  
21 Wilton Springs north toward Newport. So you are  
22 looking at phase 1, what we call an interim build,  
23 with one 12 foot travel lane in each direction. And  
24 this is up to Penland Road, and then it's basically  
25 like a three lane. So you have a center turn lane

1 within a five lane right of way. And then phase 2,  
2 in the same area, up to Penland from 73, from Hooper  
3 Highway up to Penland Road it will be two twelve foot  
4 lanes in each direction with a center turn lane, so a  
5 five lane right of way.

6 LADY: We can't hear you.

7 MS. BIRCH: Sorry about that. So is that  
8 any better? Sorry. So that would, that phasing was  
9 from Hooper Highway to Penland Road. From Penland  
10 Road to Wilton Springs Road, that very short piece at  
11 the very end near Wilton Springs Road, that is how  
12 it's been proposed as a five lane. So even if the  
13 construction phasing were to occur, that would start  
14 out as a five lane. That one would start out as a  
15 three lane and go to a five lane. It's a very short  
16 segment down by Wilton Springs Road.

17 So, and then the rest of it from, it would  
18 be like two lane from McCroy Road back down to Hooper  
19 Highway. For the interim build, you are looking at  
20 two lanes. So what TDOT calls a super two. So two  
21 twelve foot lanes with ten to 12 foot shoulders and  
22 passing lanes where it's needed. Okay. And then  
23 three lanes from (Inaudible) Road out to Penland  
24 would be the interim build, okay. So the five lane  
25 would be in the future, but they would build a five

1 lane right of way in the beginning. If that's what  
2 the studies show needs to happen.

3 So what we have done, so in the past we  
4 have referred to these as western alternative  
5 tentative of the existing road. Eastern alternative  
6 with simple crossings going out. The western  
7 alternative is alternative A. So what you are  
8 looking at tonight, alternative A is the one that  
9 goes on the west side of Stonebrook, and then  
10 alternative B is the one that goes up the existing  
11 road, okay. So when you are looking at, when you are  
12 making your comments and stuff, and if you have any  
13 questions, just ask somebody. If you are not sure  
14 which alternative you are looking at, or which one  
15 you are concerned about, just ask. But of the  
16 existing it will be alternative B.

17 So those are two alternatives that are  
18 proposed. Not both of them, but two separate  
19 alternatives. What TDOT would like is for you to  
20 provide input on which of the two you like, or don't  
21 like. What are your concerns about the alternatives.  
22 Are there things out there that we should know about,  
23 any kind of resources, you know. We want, we want to  
24 know what you know about this area.

25 And then the next step, like we had

1 mentioned before, we are still pretty much in the  
2 beginning of this. We are in the environmental  
3 phase. So we are going to look at the public  
4 comments. We are getting comments from all the  
5 federal agencies that are involved, the state  
6 agencies that are involved. We are going to look at  
7 all this, see if we need to do any more refining at  
8 this particular point in time. We are not going to  
9 decide on any functional, conceptional level. We  
10 will refine our alternatives if necessary, we are  
11 going to finish technical studies. So looking at  
12 ecology, looking at noise, looking at all these  
13 different types of potential impact. Then we are  
14 going to prepare the environmental, it's called the  
15 environmental assessment which is required by the  
16 Federal Highway Administration for this project. You  
17 will have the opportunity to come out and look at  
18 that. And then there will be another public hearing.  
19 You will know about the impacts at that point in  
20 time. We have not completed the technical studies at  
21 this point in time. So we can't really tell you what  
22 the impacts are. We are still studying them, so we  
23 will know, we will know the impacts and we will get  
24 to the environmental assessment document. Hold the  
25 public hearing. Then an alternative will be

1 selected, okay. Once the alternative is selected and  
2 the final environmental document is finished, then it  
3 goes into design. And then, so, you know, it's a  
4 very lengthy process.

5 So tonight, you know, we want you to please  
6 fill out the comment cards. Either drop them in the  
7 box or mail them back, go on line on Monday, print  
8 down some, but get the comments back, and you can  
9 mail them. Provide your comments to the court  
10 reporter or get transcripts of those once they are  
11 done. You can send e-mails to TDOT comments at  
12 TN.gov. You can send us comments that way, but we  
13 need comments by August 30th, postmarked by August  
14 30th. And then, for more information, you can  
15 contact Carla Cantrell. She is the manager of the  
16 TDOT major projects office, she is managing this  
17 project, the environmental piece of this project for  
18 TDOT. And feel free to call her or e-mail her. She  
19 is here tonight, too.

20 And with that, that's the end of my  
21 presentation.

22 MR. NAGI: Okay, Valerie, thank you very  
23 much. We are going to give you the next 15 or 20  
24 minutes or so to make sure that you get a chance to  
25 look at the plans, if you haven't looked at them. Or

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1 if you want to ask a question specifically about a  
2 specific property, you can ask a staff member one on  
3 one. But I want to make sure there is enough time  
4 that if folks have any general questions about the  
5 project that they want to ask right now, Tim is in  
6 the front of the room. He has a wireless microphone,  
7 and if you'll just raise your hand, he will bring the  
8 microphone to you. Once again, that is if you have  
9 any general questions about the project. So if you  
10 have those, raise you hand. And Sir, if you can,  
11 please state your name and your address so that we  
12 have that correctly.

13  
14 QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

15  
16 MR. LOFTUS: Hallo, my name is Dan Loftus.  
17 My question is...

18 MR. NAGI: What is your address, Sir?

19 MR. LOFTUS: Sir?

20 MR. NAGI: What is your address?

21 MR. LOFTUS: 3458 Grand Country Drive.

22 Mr. Nagi: Thank you.

23 MR. LOFTUS: My question is, what is the  
24 schedule, what's the proposed timetable for this  
25 project, the upcoming events?

1 MR. NAGI: Sir, if I heard you correctly,  
2 your question was what is the proposed timetable for  
3 this project, the upcoming events. Valerie, just a  
4 few minutes ago, if you noticed, had a flow chart  
5 back in the....in this mandatory environmental  
6 process...TDOT, we budget transportation projects in  
7 three phases. First phase is the preliminary  
8 engineering phase of development. That includes this  
9 mandatory environmental review....and  
10 ordinary....right now. If you go back to that...that  
11 was up there a few minutes ago, alright. So the next  
12 step is this mandatory environmental review which is  
13 part of the... After tonight, these comments, we  
14 will take all these comments....and we will also meet  
15 with the regional agencies as well....does that  
16 answer your question?

17  
18 THIS CONCLUDES ALL MATTERS DISCUSSED IN THIS MEETING.  
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1 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

2 State of Tennessee  
3 County of Washington

4 I, Debbie Ramey, LCR #710, Licensed Reporter and  
5 Notary Public in and for the State of Tennessee, do  
6 hereby certify that the TDOT Public Meeting held on  
7 August 8, 2018 was reported by me for Barringer Court  
8 Reporting by electronic digital recordings and  
9 handwritten notes, and for a true and accurate record  
10 of said Public Meeting to be transcribed by typists,  
11 said transcription to be printed and forwarded to the  
12 proper attorney.

13 I further certify that I am not related to or  
14 interested in the financial outcome of this case.

15 I further certify that I am duly licensed by the  
16 Tennessee Board of Court Reporting and owner of  
17 Barringer Court Reporting as evidenced by the LCR  
18 number and expiration date following my name below.

19 In witness whereof I have set my hand and affixed my  
20 seal this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2018.

21 \_\_\_\_\_  
22 C.D. Neal, LCR 426  
23 Expiration date:9/30/20  
24 Notary Public and  
25 Licensed Court Reporter

My commission expires: 9/30/20